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**HEALEY PRESENTS ENVIRONMENTAL AWARD TO BOURNE RESIDENT**

**BOURNE** – Lieutenant Governor Kerry Healey today presented Russell A. Cookingham with the Francis W. Sargent Conservation Award in recognition of his lifetime of service to the conservation of natural resources in the Commonwealth.

“Throughout a long and distinguished career, Russ Cookingham has been a champion for the causes of conservation, wildlife protection and sportsmen’s rights on Cape Cod and throughout Massachusetts,” Healey said. “Today we are honoring a dedicated public servant and extraordinary volunteer whose efforts have made a tremendous difference in the conservation of the Commonwealth’s natural resources.”

The Francis W. Sargent Conservation Award was established in 2000 by the Massachusetts Fisheries and Wildlife Board and is named for former Governor Francis W. Sargent, an avid conservationist and outdoorsman who served as Director of the Division of Fisheries & Wildlife in 1963 and 1964.

Environmental Affairs Secretary, Stephen R. Pritchard also presented Mr. Cookingham with the Environmental Achievement Award highlighting his efforts as Chairman of the Science Advisory Council (SAC).

Mr. Cookingham was appointed in 2002 by Former Governor Swift to the Council and was later voted to the position of Chairman. SAC is responsible for identifying and evaluating issues before the Environmental Management Commission of the Massachusetts Military Reservation.

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Mr. Cookingham served as Director of the Division of Fish, Game and Wildlife in New Jersey, where he was responsible for programs including inland fisheries and game, shellfisheries, marine fisheries, conservation law enforcement and land acquisition. His leadership was recognized internationally in 1984 when he was elected President of the International Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies (IAFWA). In 1987, he was honored by the IAFWA with the Seth Gordon Award for excellence in international fisheries and wildlife administration.

Since his retirement in 1988, Cookingham has actively volunteered time to numerous conservation efforts for Massachusetts and the Cape Cod region. He was appointed to the Fisheries and Wildlife Board in 1989 as the professional wildlife biologist, chaired its Finance Committee and served as a board member until 2005.

Mr. Cookingham has worked with the Buzzards Bay Coalition and the Association for the Preservation of Cape Cod. He also served on the Bourne Selectmen's Task Force for Local Pollution and continues to work with the Science Advisory Board.

Russ Cookingham, a veteran of the U.S. Marine Corps, lives in Bourne. He is the fifth recipient of Francis W. Sargent Conservation Award.

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